

DECISION REC. AND FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
EA# NM-060-01-0101
Right-of-Way NM 105271

Recommendation: I recommend that the proposed action by Central Valley Electric Coop., Inc. for installation of an overhead electric distribution line be approved as mitigated, subject to the Standard Stipulations for Overhead Electric Distribution Lines in the Roswell District, BLM. This action will affect the following public lands:


New Mexico Principal Meridian

T. 14 S., R 21 E. N.M.P.M.
Section 22: NE4SE4, S2SE4;
Section 27: NW4NE4, NE4NW4, W2NE4;
Section 28: SE4NE4, W2SW4, NE4SE4, W2SE4.

Authority of this action is the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

Rationale for recommendation: The proposed action would not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation. Portions of the subject lands and adjacent lands have been used for similar purposes and all present and potential uses and users have been considered.

Prepared by:


Irene Gonzales Salas, Realty Specialist

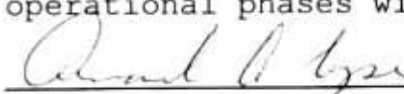
4-24-01
Date

Decision: The recommendation and rationale are adopted as my decision.

Finding of No Significant Impact: Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached environmental assessment, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant and an environmental impact statement is not required.

Compliance and Monitoring

The construction phase of this proposed action and subsequent operational phases will be monitored as per regulation.


Larry D. Bray
Assistant Field Manager
Lands and Minerals

4/24/01
Date

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
ROSWELL FIELD OFFICE
ROSWELL, NM 88201

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
EA# NM-060-01-0101
Right-of-Way NM 105271

Applicant: Central Valley Electric Coop., Inc.
P. O. Box 219
Artesia, NM 88211-0219

Location: T. 14 S., R 21 E. N.M.P.M.
Section 22: NE4SE4, S2SE4;
Section 27: NW4NE4, NE4NW4, W2NE4;
Section 28: SE4NE4, W2SW4, NE4SE4, W2SE4.

Preparer: Irene Gonzales-Salas

April 24, 2001

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed electric facilities is needed to supply electric power to the Crooked Creek Water Well.

B. Conformance with Land Use Plan

The Roswell Resource Area Management Plan (RMP) was approved in October of 1997. The proposed action is in accordance with this plan and is consistent with Bureau of Policy and guidance.

C. Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans

The proposed action does not conflict with any known State or Local planning or zoning ordinance. The authority for this action is the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

A. Proposed Action

On March 2, 2001, Central Valley Electric Cooperative, Inc., (CVE), filed a right-of-way application for an overhead electric distribution line southeast of Roswell, New Mexico. The application was completed on April 10, 2001

upon receipt of the Archeological Survey. The proposed electric distribution line would be used primarily to supply power to the Taylor & Taylor Crooked Creek Water well located on private land in SESE, Section 28, T. 14 S., R. 21 E. This proposed 7.2/12.47 KV will utilize 35 foot poles spaced at a distance of approximately 400 feet. The line will utilize pole top units: A1, A2, and A6.

An auger would be used to drill the holes for the power poles. The poles would be set in the holes with a hoist and the holes would be backfilled. Subsequently, transformers would be installed, lines strung and the powerline energized.

The right-of-way would aggregate 14,514.53 feet in length and 30 feet in width (2.749 miles 9.997 acres). Approximately 11,019.85 feet (2.087 miles, 7.590) of the proposed powerline will be located on public land.

The proposed action is in Chaves County, New Mexico. The legal land description is:

T. 14 S., R 21 E. N.M.P.M.

Section 22: NE4SE4, S2SE4;

Section 27: NW4NE4, NE4NW4, W2NE4;

Section 28: SE4NE4, W2SW4, NE4SE4, W2SE4.

B. Alternatives

1. No Action

Under this alternative the application would be rejected.

2. Change the Alignment--Reroute the Project

Reroutes were reviewed however, there are no alternate routes which would have significantly less environmental impacts or any clear advantages over the proposed action. Therefore the alternative of changing the location of the project is not analyzed further.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

General Setting. The proposed action is located northwest of Hope, NM. This area is in the easternmost foothills of the Sacramento Mountains, characterized by limestone-covered hills and ridges, which are divided by drainages and small canyons. The project area begins on the south side of Monument Canyon, and crosses Cedar Canyon and Crooked Canyon before reaching the Crooked Creek Well.

Both the surface and mineral estates are in public ownership. An inspection of the Master Title Plats revealed the following title information.

Oil and Gas Lease - Currently there are no oil and gas leases of record.

Right-of-way NM 60197 for an access road.

Affected Resources. The following critical elements have been evaluated and are either not present or are not affected by the proposed action or the alternatives in this EA.

Air Quality

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

Farm Lands (Prime and Unique)

Floodplains

Native American Religious Concerns

Threatened or Endangered (T&E) Species (plant & animal)

Wastes, Hazardous and/or Solid

Water Quality, Drinking and Ground

Wetlands and Riparian Zones

Wild and Scenic Rivers

Wilderness

The impact of the proposed action and alternatives to minority or low-income populations or communities has been considered and no significant impact is anticipated.

A. Soils

The soils are of the Ector-Rock outcrop complex, 9 to 30 percent slopes. This complex occurs on the limestone hills in the western part of the survey area. This complex consists of about 60 percent Ector cobbly loam, 25 percent Rock outcrop, and 15 percent less extensive soils.

Runoff is rapid. For the Ector soils the hazard of water erosion is moderate, and the hazard of soil blowing is slight. Gullies are common in the soils on the fans and flood plains of the valleys.

B. Vegetation

The native vegetation is consistent with Chihuahuan Desert Scrub, featuring catclaw acacia, creosote, buckthorn, prickly pear, barrel and horse-crippler cacti, and cane and pencil cholla, with mesquite and various grasses in the canyons.

C. Range

The proposed project is located within the following grazing allotment:

Allotment No. 64090
Taylor Ranch
P. O. Box 344
Roswell, NM 88202-0344

D. Wildlife

Wildlife species utilizing this habitat include mule deer, pronghorn antelope, dove, quail, Northern harrier, coyote, foxes, rabbits, kangaroo rats, pocket gophers, prairie rattlesnakes, as well as a variety of raptors.

E. VRM/Recreation

The subject lands are within a Class IV VRM area. The proposed project is located in an area where numerous oil and gas activities are ongoing.

Recreational use is varied from severely limited to nonexistent. The small amount of recreational use in the proposed project area primarily involves seasonal hunting activities. Animals hunted include mule deer, pronghorn antelope, dove, quail, coyote and rabbit.

F. Cultural Resources

An archeological survey (01-R-038-A), revealed no cultural material and recommended cultural clearance for the proposed project as staked.

IV. Environmental Impacts

Impacts of the Proposed Action. Impacts from the proposed action are minimal and short-term in nature. Temporary soil and vegetative disruption would occur during installation of the powerline. Removal of vegetation along the right-of-way will not take place. However, some soil loss will occur from soil blowing winds, as a natural result from exposing of the soils during installation of the power poles. Some vegetation would be crushed by vehicles during installation/maintenance activities. A reduction in AUMs would not occur.

Impacts from the proposed construction activity may cause temporary disruption of wildlife activity within the immediate vicinity of the project area. More mobile species such as small mammals and birds would temporarily leave the site during

actual construction, maintenance activities but would return in a short period of time.

Visual resources would not be significantly affected. The proposed right-of-way would have minimal to no impact on the current recreational uses of the area.

No Archeological materials were revealed as a result of the cultural survey.

Impacts of the Alternatives.

1. The "No Action" alternative denies the application. This alternative would result in no environmental impacts; however, there would be adverse economic impacts to the applicant. Electric service would not be provided to the livestock water wells. There have been no significant or unmitigatable impacts identified which would warrant selection of this alternative.

Mitigating Measures

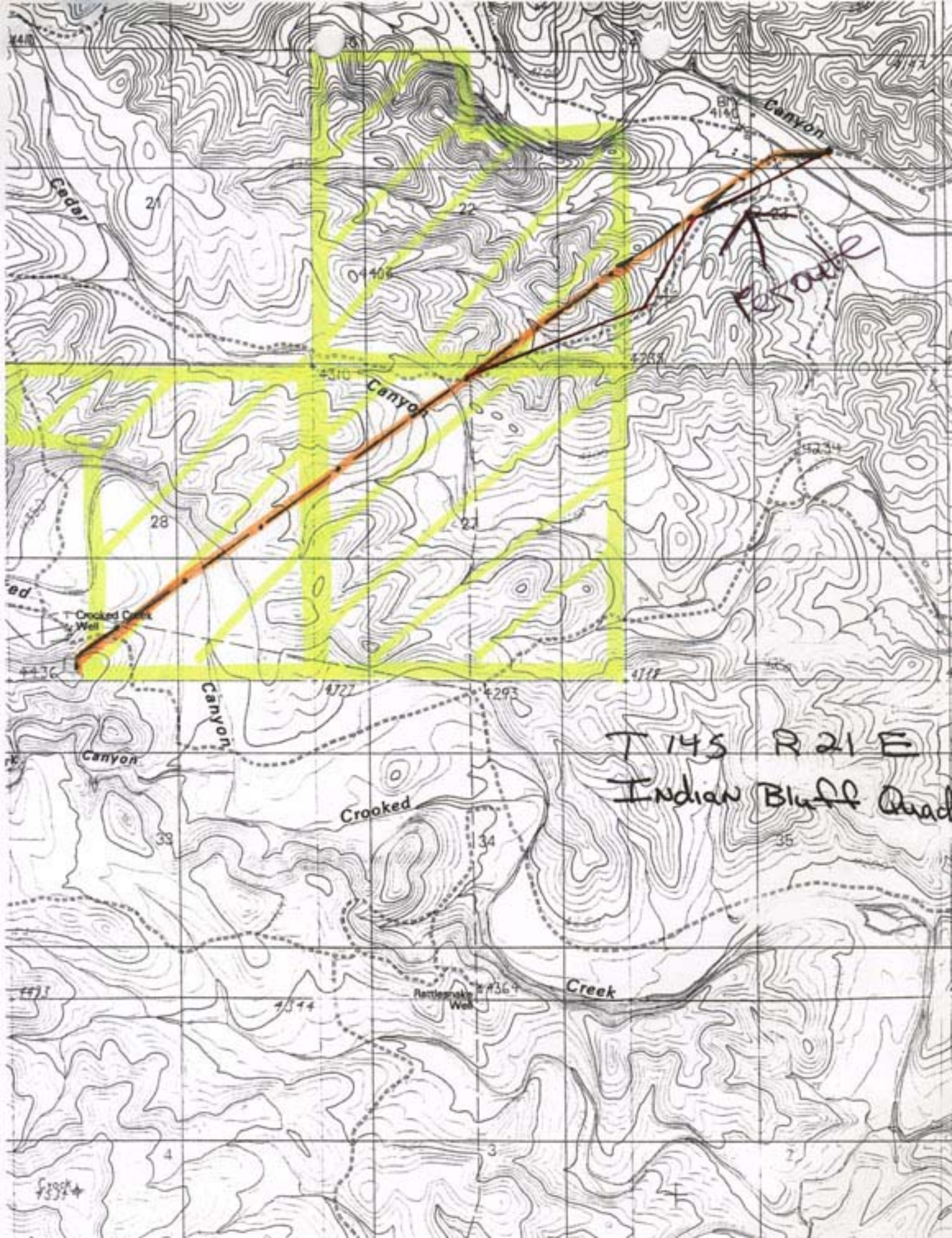
The applicant will be required to comply with the Roswell District Standard Stipulations for Overhead Electric Distribution Lines as directed in the proposed RMP.

Residual Impacts

The lands along the proposed route have already been disturbed by powerline, roads and pipelines. It is anticipated that the lands along the proposed route as well as adjacent lands, will continue to be used for a variety of right-of-way facilities, therefore, the cumulative effects of the project on the identified resources and existing rights-of-way are not significant.

V. Consultation and Coordination

The comments and suggestions expressed during the consultation have been incorporated into this EA.



T 14 S R 21 E
Indian Bluff Quad